

Chiropractic Center is 1st project at Riggs Brook

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*Originally published by The Capital Weekly*

*March 29, 2007*

AUGUSTA — On the bright sunny afternoon of Thursday, March 22, the field off Route 3 was extremely muddy, but that couldn't dampen the enthusiasm that was evident from everyone for the new enterprise.

Dr. Andre Nadeau, an ambitious young chiropractor, had invited city officials to join him in breaking ground for the Nadeau Chiropractic Associates Alternative Health Care Center.

Nadeau already has an attractive office farther back along Route 3 on Church Hill Road. But he envisions expanding and widening his practice with four health-care buildings on a 5.5-acre plot of land. They will be the first construction project to take place in the highly anticipated Riggs Brook Village Zone.

Riggs Brook Village is a 1,500-acre tract centered on the intersection of Route 3 with Church Hill Road about 4 miles east of Bangor Street and 5 miles east of the new Cushnoc Crossing bridge over the Kennebec.

It is a largely undeveloped area. Several years ago, Augusta's city planners decided to zone it in a special way to prevent unsightly sprawl that has plagued other parts of the city. For example, curb cuts can only be made once every 150 feet.

Regulations are such that buildings should look attractive and professional.

"I think it's fantastic," Nadeau said. "I think with the new bridge and the traffic flow, it's going to develop very nicely. I think if they continue with the ordinance and the codes, it's going to be a real nice setup."

Another new structure in the Riggs Brook Zone is the headquarters of the Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, a log cabin-type building on Church Hill Road.

The big stumbling block to development of the area for years has been the lack of sewer and water utilities being extended out that far from downtown. But plans are in the works to extend the utilities one way or another.

And the lack of sewer and water didn't stop Nadeau. He is proceeding with a septic tank and a well.

His main building will be 4,600 square feet and include 20 treatment rooms. Nadeau expects it to be open for business by October of this year.

His team includes two additional chiropractors, three massage therapists and six administrative staff. He is thinking of adding one more chiropractor.

After the first building is complete, Nadeau wants to start construction of three additional buildings, each about 3,000 square feet. One would house a health food store.

And Nadeau would forge an unusual partnership with traditional medical doctors. He would house a pharmacy in another building and a general practitioner's office. "I have already been in discussion with a couple of medical doctors," Nadeau said.

In the last building would be a physical therapy suite, including the alternative approaches of reflexology and acupuncture. "Whether one wishes to do traditional medicine, alternative medicine, or nutrition, they could have their needs fulfilled here instead of having to drive across town," Nadeau said.

The four buildings will be connected by walkways.

Another project that has been announced nearby is the multi-unit housing subdivision to be developed by William Kieltyka, east of Cony High School on South Belfast Avenue. These are going to be high-end homes and they are just outside of the Riggs Brook Village Zone, according to Michael Duguay, Augusta's director of development services.

"Almost every property is now in play, but there's nothing concrete I can talk to you about," Duguay said.

Augusta City Manager William Bridgeo has proposed using tax increment financing on the Augusta Crossing shopping center to generate public improvement revenue that could be used to extend sewer and water lines to Riggs Brook Village.

“All options are on the table,” Duguay said. “But it’s complicated. There’s other priorities in the city, too.”